

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on January 24, 2006 has been received and its contents have been carefully considered.

In this Amendment, Applicants have amended the specification and cancelled claims 16-20 and 31-36. Other claims were previously canceled. Claim 7 is the only remaining independent claim, and claims 7, 10-15, and 29-30 remain pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Initially, it is noted with great appreciation that the Examiner indicates claims 7, 10-15 and 29-30 are allowable over the prior art of record. Moreover, the nonelected claims 8-9 dependent from claim 7 should be allowed along with claim 7. In this regard, the undersigned attorney spoke with the Examiner by telephone, and the Examiner confirmed that, upon the final allowance of claim 7 (as a generic claim), the withdrawn status of claims 8 and 9 would be retracted, and these claims would be allowed as well.

The specification has been objected to for informalities. In response thereto, the specification has been editorially amended to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner, as well as other informalities noted during the review. Thus, the objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 16-18 and 31-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Because claims 16-18 and 31-36 have been cancelled, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection has been rendered moot.

Claims 16-18, 31-33 and 35-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over *Mansour* in view of *Bahl et al.* It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is moot in view of the cancellation herein of claims 16-18, 31-33 and 35-36.

Claim 34 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over the preceding rejection as applied to claim 17, and further in view of *Martel* (of record). Claim 34 has been cancelled, and it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is moot in view of the cancellation herein of claim 34.

Based on the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and such a Notice, with allowed claims 7-15 and 29-30, earnestly is solicited.

If the Examiner believes that a conference would be of value in expediting the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned counsel to arrange for such a conference.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this amendment and response to Office Action. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

By:



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